BACKGROUNDER

Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP)

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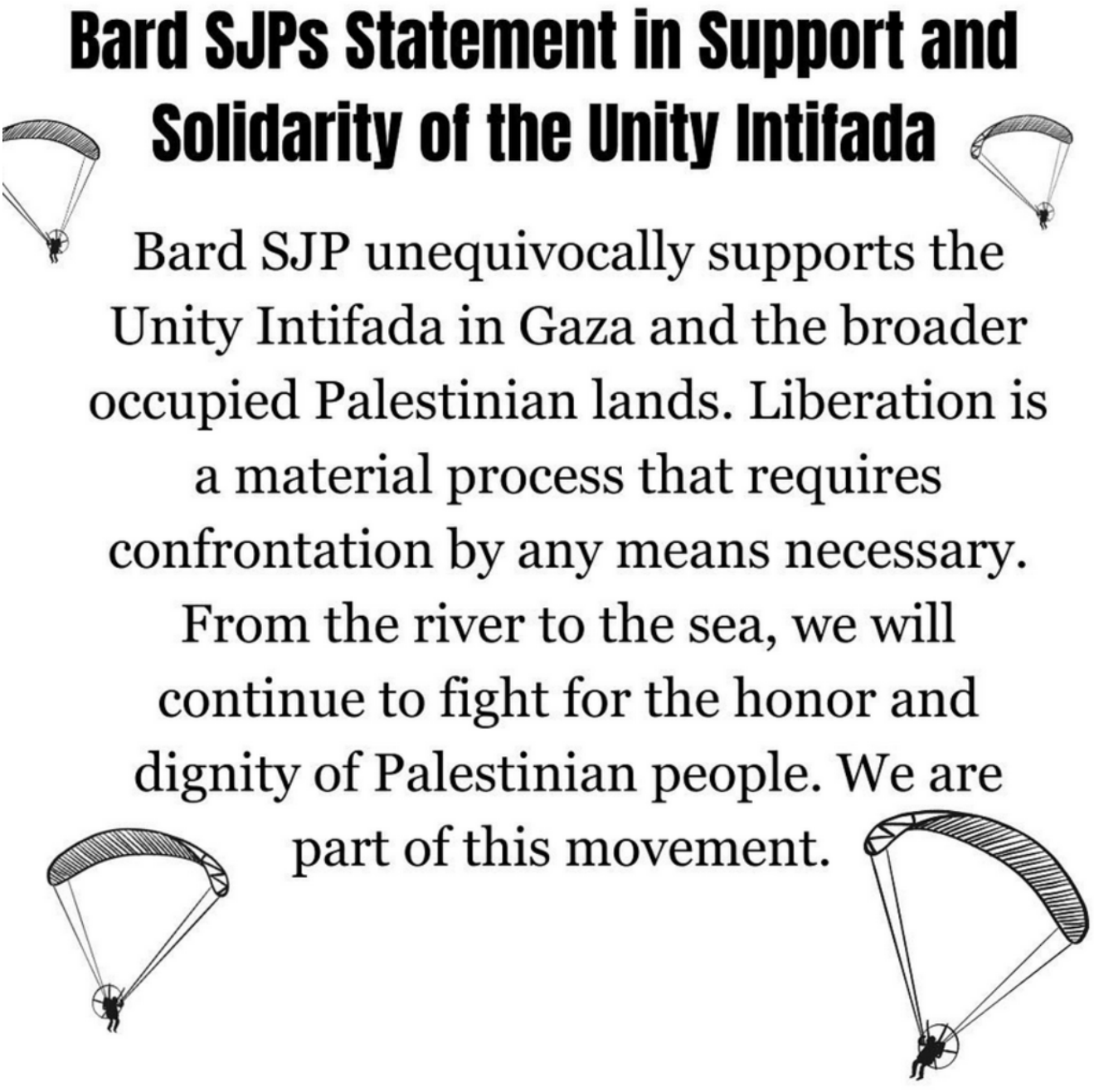
In the days following Hamas's October 7, 2023, invasion of Israel, the national leadership of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and many of the organization's campus chapters explicitly endorsed the actions of Hamas and their armed attacks on Israeli civilians and voiced an increasingly radical call for confronting and "dismantling" Zionism on U.S. college campuses. Some SJP chapters issued pro-Hamas messaging and/or promoted violent anti-Israel messaging channels.

One of SJP's most prominent actions was calling for a "Day of Resistance" on October 12, during which chapters on campuses across the country would convene rallies and other actions to applaud Palestinian "resistance" to Israel. The tone of the call was taken from a previous SJP statement that encouraged "not just slogans and rallies, but armed confrontation with oppressors" in Israel. There was also a "Day of Resistance Toolkit" in which SJP made clear that it advocates for Hamas or other Palestinian forces to conquer all of Israel, and for the "complete liberation" of Israel and the full influx of Palestinians to Israeli land. The toolkit also called for chapters to bring this resistance to the U.S. by "dismantling Zionism" on its campuses and "challenging Zionist hegemony."

Numerous SJP chapters released inflammatory statements in support of Palestinians seizing control of Israeli territory, including some which explicitly endorse the use of violence and attacks on civilians. "We reject the distinction between 'civilian' and 'militant.' We reject the distinction between 'settler' and

'soldier,'" The George Washington University SJP wrote. "A settler is an aggressor, a soldier, and an occupier even if they are lounging on our occupied beaches." The SJP chapter of CUNY Law shared, "If you support Palestine understand that necessitates supporting our right to defend ourselves and liberate our homeland by any means necessary."

Chapters have also adopted the image of a person flying in a paraglider, a clear reference to the Hamas terrorists who utilized paragliders as part of their massacre of Israeli civilians, as a symbol of their call for resistance.


Bard SJPs Statement in Support and Solidarity of the Unity Intifada
Bard SJP unequivocally supports the Unity Intifada in Gaza and the broader occupied Palestinian lands. Liberation is a material process that requires confrontation by any means necessary. From the river to the sea, we will continue to fight for the honor and dignity of Palestinian people. We are part of this movement.

Some SJP chapters issued pro-Hamas messaging and/or promoted violent anti-Israel propaganda social media accounts. The University of Illinois SJP chapter shared a video which shows what appears to be a Hamas terrorist filming himself from inside the home of an Israeli family during the attack. At least three chapters referred readers to Resistance News Network (RNN) -- part of an encrypted messaging application that shares violent images and videos of attacks on Israelis and disseminates Hamas propaganda -- since the Hamas attack, and five others

routinely shared RNN content even before October 7, 2023.

ORIGINAL ARTICLE:

Preface

This article provides background on the beliefs, tactics and activities of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP). At the outset, it is important to note that while we profoundly disagree with what SJP represents, we understand that they have the right to their views and to express them. ADL fully supports and defends free speech principles in America, and we recognize that the First Amendment protects even hateful or offensive speech. We have also long believed that the best answer to hate speech is not censorship, but more speech. It is because of these principles that ADL does not seek to censor or silence SJP, but rather to exercise our own First Amendment rights to report on them, criticize them, and expose their views to greater public scrutiny.

Introduction

Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) is a network of pro-Palestinian student groups across the US which disseminate anti-Israel propaganda often laced with inflammatory and at times combative rhetoric. They are a leading campus organizer of Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaigns against Israel, and specialize in using confrontational tactics such as disrupting student-run pro-Israel events, and constructing mock “apartheid walls” and distributing fake “eviction notices” to dramatize what they consider Israeli abuses of Palestinians. As proponents of “anti-normalization” between pro-Palestinian and pro-Israel advocates, they make it more difficult for groups with diverging views on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to work together and achieve mutual understanding

Although many SJP chapters state that they reject anti-Semitism, they also regularly demonize Jewish students who identify as Zionists or proud supporters of the State of Israel, despite the fact that a more nuanced understanding of Zionism shows that a connection to the state of Israel is an important part of many Jews' religious or cultural identities. SJP's insistence that one cannot be a good Jew while still being a Zionist is a blatant effort to constrain the Jewish identities of their fellow students and can turn campuses into hostile places for Jewish students. In one instance an SJP chapter called for the expulsion of the Jewish student group Hillel from the campus (see below).

The organizational history and structure of SJP is complex. The first chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine was founded at the University of California, Berkeley, in 2001. Additional chapters formed, but they did not come under a single umbrella until 2006 with the creation of the short-lived Palestine Solidarity Movement (PSM), which was itself created by American Muslims for Palestine (AMP).

American Muslims for Palestine (AMP) has been a leading organization providing anti-Zionist training and education to students and Muslim community organizations in the U.S. After the decline of the PSM, AMP placed a heavy emphasis on supporting and helping coordinate the activity of SJP, assisting in its development as one of primary organizers of anti-Israel events on campus over the years. It described SJP as part of a "signature project" to "organize and unify the work for Palestine on campuses in the United States," according to a 2010 brochure.[1]

The first National Students for Justice in Palestine (NSJP) conference took place in 2011, and by 2018, NSJP claimed there were more than 200 affiliated chapters. There is reason to be skeptical of this claim, however: a 2018 review of major social media platforms found that the majority of SJP chapter social media accounts showed no significant activity for at least 12 months. Today, SJP chapters are affiliated with NSJP but are autonomous entities. They are united by

three “points of unity,” including 1) Ending Israel’s occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the Wall; 2) Recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and 3) Respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN Resolution 194.[2]

Individual SJP chapters have adopted far more radical principles, including calling for the dissolution of the state of Israel, countenancing potentially violent “resistance” to Israel, and calling for “anti-normalization” – an insistence that no dialogue can be held with individuals or groups who/which identify with Zionism.

Although individual students associated with SJP have made troubling comments about Jews and Zionists, especially via social media, the group’s most potent ways of spreading hostility to Israel is through their programs and campaigns.

SJP Ideological Orientation

SJP and the Demonization of Zionism

Many SJP chapters have explicitly disavowed anti-Semitism, and there is no reason to doubt their sincere opposition to overt anti-Jewish hatred. But they fail to see that because large percentages of American Jews have stated that Zionism or a connection to the State of Israel are important parts of their religious, social, or cultural identities, SJP’s wholesale demonization of Zionism and Zionists amounts to the demonization of a significant number of their fellow students.

Such demonization most commonly takes the form of repeated proclamations that Zionism and Zionists are racist. “Zionism is a hateful, racist ideology,” a speaker at an SJP-sponsored event said in March 2018 at Eastern Michigan University.[3] In March 2018, Columbia University’s JVP and SJP chapters hosted Steven Salaita, a vehemently anti-Israel and anti-Zionist speaker who in 2014 lost his job offer at the University of Illinois for “vicious tweets about Israel and

Zionists."[4] During his talk, Salaita said, "racist violence is based on the ideology" of Zionism.[5] "The three basic characteristics of Zionism are: racism, expansionism, [and] settler colonialism," according to a mock apartheid wall constructed by University of California, San Diego Students for Justice and Muslim Student Association chapters.[6] In November 2017, SJP members at Stony Brook University heckled students from the local Hillel Jewish organization while holding a sign that read "Zionism is Terrorism".[7]

SJP activists frequently accuse students on campus who consider themselves Zionists of being white supremacists or Nazis. "It's also a really clarifying example to talk about what Zionism actually is, which is a white supremacist, nationalist movement, and that's why white supremacist nationalists can identify with it," a speaker opined at an JVP-SJP Deadly Exchange event at Eastern Michigan University in March 2018.[8] "It's white supremacist solidarity," he concluded.[9] During Israeli Apartheid Week at Occidental College (organized by SJP and the Jewish Student Union) in March 2019, flyers were distributed and an article was published in the student newspaper arguing that "we need to talk about Zionism in relation to white supremacy if we want to work toward a just society."[10]

Particularly noteworthy is a slideshow that San Diego State SJP posted as part of a recruiting campaign in 2013. The slideshow, entitled "The Right Side: A Guide to the Moral High Ground," repeatedly compared Israeli policy to the Holocaust. The first slide, titled "The Racist Grandpa," claims that "no grandson of a Nazi, or a KKK clansman or a supporter of apartheid in South Africa can be proud of their grandfather. The last thing you want to be is that racist grandpa in the future." The slide then warns: "Today, many of us could be racist grandpas or grandmas in the future if we continue to let ourselves be fooled by politicians, lobbyists and the media" with regard to Israel.[11]

In 2012, the Cornell chapter of SJP published a newspaper which described Israel as a "white supremacist state" and that university administrators "essentially took orders from the Zionist groups on campus" regarding university programming.

The newspaper also included the logo of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a terrorist organization.[12]

SJP members insist that there is an absolute distinction between Judaism and Zionism, and that Zionist Jews possess bifurcated identities. "[S]tructural racism...fed into this ideology of Jews being the chosen people sort of hijacking the Jewish faith in order to institute an ideology of white supremacist Jewry that was going to take citizenship over in historic Palestine," Dr. Lila Sharif, an Assistant Professor of Asian American Studies, said at an SJP event at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign in October 2017.[13]

In November 2017, Eman Abdelfadeel, the Georgetown chair of SJP, called for SJP activists to "break the relationship between Judaism and Zionism," thus denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination.[14] In March 2018, a speaker at an SJP event said that all communities have "elements...that are harmful" and that "for Jewish folks, that's Zionists," at Eastern Michigan University.[15] In his March 2018 SJP-JVP sponsored talk at Columbia University, Steven Salaita said that Zionism is "a category that pretends to be ethnic and pretends to be religious but it's a political identity."[16] In April 2019, SJP-University of Minnesota co-hosted an event entitled "Separating Judaism & Zionism" with JVP-Twin Cities and Macalaster Students United for Palestinian Equal Rights for Israeli Apartheid Week.[17]

SJP's systematic demonization of Zionists and Zionism amounts to an effort to dictate the acceptable contours of Jewish identity and insist that Jews strip their connection with Israeli culture and society from their Jewishness. In tandem with confrontational tactics, this can have the effect of turning campuses into hostile places for Jewish students.

SJP on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

SJP views the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the prism of colonialist theory.

Instead of recognizing that the conflict is founded on disputes over land, fears of violence, and competing national narratives, SJP insists on viewing the conflict as a one-sided moral issue, with Israelis, Zionists, and sometimes Jews taking the role of the oppressive colonizer (thereby denying the centuries-long Jewish connection to the land), and Palestinians, including U.S. designated foreign terrorist groups such as Hamas, taking the role of innocent victims of colonialist racism. Indeed, the theme of Israeli Apartheid Week for 2019 was "Stop Arming Colonialism."[18] This perspective makes it difficult to find common ground between Israelis and Palestinians, or between American Zionists and pro-Palestinian activists.

Although the three "points of unity" all SJP chapters are expected to adopt do not mention the destruction of the state of Israel, it is a common enough refrain among some SJP speakers. The NYC chapter of SJP includes in its principles that it views "the establishment of the state of israel [sic]" to be "an ongoing project of settler-colonialism that will be stopped only through Palestinian national liberation."[19] The SJP chapter of the University of California at Davis wrote in July 2018 that "it is an ideological fantasy to really believe that progress is possible so long as the state of Israel exists….The goal of Palestinian resistance is not to establish 'love' with those who are responsible for the suffering of the Palestinian people; it is to completely dismantle those forces at play."[20]

It should also be noted that the SJP "points of unity" state that Israel must end its "occupation and colonization of all Arab lands," but some SJP members and chapters refer to the Israeli occupation as having started in 1948, when Israel was founded. In July 2018, Tulane's SJP chapter wrote that "Israel's occupation [of Palestinians land] began seventy years ago."[21] In May of 2018, SJP at DePaul University distributed fliers claiming that Israel has engaged in "70 years of occupation."[22]

SJP on Violence and Terrorism

SJP's one-sided approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict sometimes goes so far as to tacitly or explicitly endorse Palestinians' use of terrorism and violence to achieve their political goals.

Based on qualitative research and comprehensive literature reviews the following examples are demonstrative of tacit SJP associations of condoning violence:

In April 2018, Julia Kassem, a speaker at an SJP event at Wayne State University, said that "Resistance to occupation by any means necessary is not [by definition] violence," and called on her listeners to fight oppression "by any means necessary including armed resistance." She concluded, "There's a quote I just want to say from George Habash of the PFLP from 1967 that the only language that the enemy understands is the language of revolutionary violence."[23] In May 2019, a statement published by Columbia SJP, which was read aloud during a protest by the group that month, stated that "the Palestinian [sic] of Gaza have made their choice: they refuse to be broken, they continue to resist. This path of violence will come to an end when the land is liberated, when Zionism is dismantled, when the apartheid regime covering all historic Palestine disintegrates."[24]

In February 2017, the Wayne State SJP chapter hosted Phyllis Bennis, a frequent critic of Israel and advocate for Palestinian rights, who said that although some people call for an end to violence on the part of Palestinian resistance to Israel, "the problem is that if you just stop the violence you would not have justice."[25] In a May 2019 response to a publication by the far-right David Horowitz Freedom Center, University of Minnesota SJP wrote that "Hamas is a political party which fights back against violence from the israeli [sic] state. If Hamas are terrorists, than [sic] so is israel [sic]."[26]

At least one SJP chapter has venerated and even hosted a Palestinian terrorist. According to media reports, in May 2017, the SJP chapter at Northwestern University hosted Rasmea Odeh, who was convicted by an Israeli court for her role in a 1969 bombing that killed two Israelis but was later released as part of a

prisoner exchange. During her presentation she called on her audience to "continue to fight American Zionism."[27] In February 2015, the DePaul University SJP chapter held a fundraiser honoring Odeh and celebrating her "resilience."[28] According to the group's Facebook event, all proceeds from the fundraiser went towards Odeh's legal defense fund to pay for her defense on federal charges of immigration fraud, for which she was ultimately convicted.[29]

In September 2015, SJP at UC San Diego celebrated Odeh at a general member meeting, sharing a photo of the convicted terrorist with her fist raised.[30] In May 2017, SJP at the University of Chicago posted a statement calling Odeh their "brave community leader," who "taught [them] so much about the continuous struggle for liberation."[31]

In a publicity post for their March 2017 event about feminism in Palestine, SJP at UC San Diego posted a dramatic drawing of Leila Khaled, a member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine who was convicted for her role in hijacking TWA flight 840 in August 1969 and the foiled hijacking of El Al Flight 219 in September 1970.[32] The image, which shows Khaled smiling while holding a rifle, was subtitled "Don't forget the struggle."

In February 2016, Vassar Students for Justice in Palestine posted an image of a student wearing a sweatshirt emblazoned with an image of Khaled holding a gun, captioned, "resistance is not terrorism."[33] SJP's decision to post this image on sweatshirts alongside the hashtag #ExistenceisResistance is a tacit indicator that they condone the use of violence.

SJP Campus Activities

Anti-Normalization:

Some SJP chapters have called on activists to avoid "normalization" of, cooperation or even dialogue with pro-Israel groups. According to University of

Minnesota's Students for Justice in Palestine chapter, normalization means "to participate in any project or initiative or activity, local or international, specifically designed for gathering...Palestinians and Israelis."[34]

At Columbia University and San Diego State University, the policy of anti-normalization was officially adopted and in April 2010, Columbia SJP issued a statement adapted from a position paper by the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (the leading pro-boycott organization in the Palestinian territories).[35] The statement included a provision that disallowed dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians, claiming that it would only help to "whitewash" Israel's image. The New York City chapter of SJP also rejects "any and all collaboration, dialogue, and coalition work with Zionist organizations through a strict policy of anti-normalization."

SJP at Georgetown implemented its anti-normalization policy in 2013 when it refused to participate in a campus film screening with pro-Israel groups.[36] In 2015, the group posted its opposition to a dialogue program between Muslims and Jews in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, saying that "when these interfaith discussions are normalized, it leads to religion being used as a tool to whitewash Israel's crimes."[37] Georgetown University SJP Chair Eman Abdelfadeel reiterated her chapter's commitment to anti-normalization in March 2016.[38]

SJP at UC Irvine held an "anti-normalization teach-in" in November 2017,[39] and SJP at George Washington University hosted a panel featuring experts on the definition of normalization, titled "Why You Should Take Sides: Israel/Palestine and Normalization" in March 2016.[40]

Some SJP chapters have gone further still, insisting that Zionism and Zionists need to be confronted and expelled from campus spaces. In April 2018, members of SJP and JVP at New York University protested a pro-Israel event held by campus groups. According to media reports, after the burning of an Israeli flag,

SJP president Khalid Abu Dawas said, “We’re not going to let them stand by and support Zionism...Our point is to make being Zionist uncomfortable on the NYU campus.”[41] In November of 2015, SJP activists at a protest against high tuition at Hunter College in New York chanted, “Zionists out of CUNY.”[42]

New York City’s SJP chapter has similarly refused to collaborate with pro-Israel organizations, as they outline in their Points of Unity section on their website: “We reject any and all collaboration, dialogue, and coalition work with Zionist organizations through a strict policy of anti-normalization and encourage our comrades in other organizations to do the same.”[43]

In May 2018, the Stony Brook University chapter of SJP advocated for the expulsion of the Jewish student group Hillel from the campus, arguing, “We ask the university: if there were Nazis, white nationalists, and KKK members on campus, would their identity have to accepted and respected? Then why would we respect the views of Zionists?”[44]

In April 2019, Columbia SJP took the unusual step of calling on their fellow students and “allied organizations” to join in their boycott of two on-campus pro-Israel organizations.[45] In May 2019, Super UW, University of Washington’s SJP chapter, published an open letter to the university administration and student government groups complaining that Hillel was allowed to participate in a campus Middle East fair. The letter claimed that “the very presence of Hillel and the representation of a violent settler colonial state is both political and unquestionably neither “family-friendly” nor safe for Palestinian students.”[46]

In one noteworthy example, Stanford student and SJP member Hamzeh Daoud threatened in a July 2018 social media post to “physically fight Zionists on campus.” Four hours later, Daoud edited the post, changing the word “physically” to “intellectually,” but his comments had already sparked controversy. After intense backlash from Jewish groups, Daoud released a statement to the Stanford Daily explaining his “emotion-filled reaction to yet another layer of trauma,” regarding the

July 19 passage of the Israeli Nation State Law.[47] He stated that he has started to work with the Stanford community to "rebuild trust through education and dialogue," and announced that he would be stepping down from his job as a Resident Assistant at the university.[48]

"Israeli Apartheid Week," "Apartheid Walls," "Eviction Notices"

SJP is known for using multiple tactics to bring its cause to the attention of larger campus communities. Many chapters participate in an annual event known as "Palestine Awareness Week" or "Israeli Apartheid Week," during which chapters typically sponsor a variety of events designed to vilify Israel, including lectures, panel discussions, and film screenings. Some chapters adopt the more confrontational tactic of constructing fake "apartheid walls" on campus, which are intended to depict Israel's separation barrier with the West Bank. These mock walls often have statements posted on them to call attention to alleged Israeli human rights violations.

In April 2018, while University of Georgia's Dawgs for Israel celebrated Israel's 70th anniversary, UGA's Students for Justice in Palestine stood in protest nearby. The SJP chapter's president, Raphael Eissa, said that the Jewish group's celebration was appropriating Palestinian culture: "They're taking the food, playing the music, all the while dehumanizing the people that created it and gave it to the region."[49] The protest included an apartheid wall made of three wooden panels, which included notable dates and statistics on the conflict and quotes from people like Theodor Herzl, the founder of political Zionism.

In May 2019, SJP at the University of Maryland protested an Israeli Independence Day celebration with an apartheid wall made of panels containing the message "Free Gaza," as well as a call to support BDS.[50] SJP at DePaul University also erected an apartheid wall in May 2019.[51]

In March 2018, UC Davis SJP members constructed a mock apartheid wall

alongside participants from Students for a Democratic Society. Approximately 40 to 50 protesters condemned Israel, holding signs with statements, “Brick by Brick, Wall by Wall, Apartheid has got to fall.”[52] The wall was constructed from individual panels, some of which read: “Stop U.S. aid to Israel” and “Support BDS and Palestine will be free.”[53]

San Diego State Students for Justice in Palestine’s mock apartheid wall, part of its April 2017 Palestine Solidarity Month, consisted of multiple hinged wooden panels depicting bombings and violence, as well as quotes from Israel’s founders. The SJP chapter’s treasurer, Farris Nabulsi, claimed that the wall “is made to be more of an artistic depiction and message to educate people…[it] is a different approach to show some appreciation for some art while also showing the reality of what happens in Palestine.”[54]

As a part of its annual Israeli Apartheid Week in March 2015, UC Berkeley Students for Justice in Palestine constructed a mock apartheid wall, and dramatized interactions at an Israeli checkpoint.[55] Similarly, for Israeli Apartheid Week in 2019, Wesleyan University’s SJP and JVP erected a mock apartheid wall outside of a prominent student activities center.[56]

In some cases, SJP chapters adopt the confrontational tactic of slipping mock “eviction notices” under the doors of students living in campus and off-campus housing. For example, in April 2014, SJP at NYU slipped as many as 2000 mock eviction notices under the doors of student dorm rooms.[57] The notices read in part, “EVICTION NOTICE: We regret to inform you that your suite is scheduled for demolition in three days.” It continued, “Eviction notices are routinely given to Palestinian families living under Israeli occupation for no other reason than their ethnicity.”

Similar campaigns were undertaken by SJP groups at Rutgers in October 2013,[58] at Harvard in March 2013,[59] at Northeastern University in February 2014,[60] at UC Berkeley in March 2015,[61] at the University of Michigan in December 2013,

[62] at Florida Atlantic University in March 2012,[63] at Ohio State University in October 2014,[64] and at Claremont College in March 2016.[65]

While mock eviction notices appear to have fallen out of a favor as an activist tactic in 2017 and 2018, SJP at Emory University employed the tactic in April 2019, garnering significant media attention and controversy, as there was ample concern that Jewish students had been the target.[66] Sensing backlash, Emory SJP published an open letter defending themselves and calling on "all community members to avoid endorsing or co-sponsoring events with" Emory Hillel, the Zionist Organization of America, the Emory-Israel Public Affairs Committee (EIPAC), Emory Eagles for Israel and Emory Chabad.[67] The controversy spurred a review by the University Senate Open Expression Committee, which ultimately found that SJP's activities were not anti-Semitic but that they violated university posting policies since the eviction notices were placed on students' doors.

Harassment of Student Groups

SJP activists frequently mobilize to protest pro-Israel speakers on campus, and often go further by disrupting programs sponsored by their fellow students. The following is a partial list of these actions.

- October 2019: The SJP chapter at Benedictine University in Illinois tweeted a video of an SJP member publicly calling on a Jewish Holocaust survivor, who had spoken on campus, to condemn the establishment of the "Zionist Israeli state," which she said was responsible for "the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people." The student claimed that her experience growing up in the Palestinian territories during a period of sometimes violent Palestinian resistance to Israeli rule was the equivalent of having survived the Holocaust.[68]
- May 2019: SJP at Brandeis University vandalized a Hillel art installation for Israel's Independence Day with the slogan "Free Palestine."[69]
- October 2018: SJP-affiliated Students United for Palestinian Equal Rights at

Oregon State University protested a StandWithUs event that was hosting two former Israeli Defense Force soldiers. They held signs that read: “Hold Israel Accountable,” “IDF Commits War Crimes,” and “End the Occupation.”[70]

- May 2018: SJP at UCLA disrupted an event about indigenous communities in the Middle East, an event convened by the student-led Students Supporting Israel. SJP protestors tore down Armenian and Israeli flags, draped a Palestinian flag in front of the podium, and drowned out student presentations with chants of “Free Free Palestine” and “Fuck white supremacy.”[71]
- March 2018: SJP at Columbia University called a student leader of Students Supporting Israel a “terrorist,” while the student was handing out literature during Hebrew Liberation Week.[72]
- February 2018: SJP at Columbia University held a demonstration in which they set up mock checkpoints to intimidate those attending a speech on campus given by Israel’s Consul General in New York, Dani Dayan.[73]
- February 2018: SJP at University of Georgia members interrupted an event convened by Students Supporting Israel at the University of Georgia.[74]
- November 2017: SJP at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, disrupted an event hosted by Illini Students Supporting Israel featuring Hen Mazzig, an openly gay IDF commander who was trying to talk about his coming out experience. SJP students reportedly laughed at Mazzig, and one told him he was “pinkwashing.”[75]
- November 2017: SJP at Bard College disrupted a lecture by Shany Mor, an Associate Fellow at the Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and Humanities, on the topic of “Compromise and Representation.” In a statement, SJP said they targeted Dr. Mor, who had previously worked at the Israeli National Security Council, as a way of protesting the “colonization of the mind” and “normalization.”[76]
- May 2017: SJP at Cornell University disrupted a private Israeli Independence Day celebration held by several Jewish student groups. SJP members handed out anti-Israel fliers and then held a “die-in.”[77]
- May 2017: SJP at CUNY interrupted a Students Supporting Israel event featuring

Israel's Consul General in New York, Dani Dayan. Members of SJP repeatedly accused Dayan and Israel of "ethnic cleansing, apartheid, forced sterilization, and genocide."[78]

- May 2017: SJP at UC Irvine disrupted the Q&A section of a Students Supporting Israel event. SJP members chanted slogans calling for the destruction of Israel and violent "resistance." One member of SJP yelled: "These people are occupiers, they're colonizers; you should not be allowed on our fucking campus!"[79]
- February 2017: An SJP student at Florida State University interrupted a Hillel-sponsored event by unfurling a large Palestinian flag and saying: "There are not many opportunities for me to look my colonizers in the eyes with their hands bare of weaponry to tell them [that] what they are doing to Palestine and Palestinians is wrong...and so Palestine will never be taken away, it will never disappear and Palestinians all across the world are ready to return. They will return one day...Free Free Palestine."[80]
- May 2016: SJP at UC Irvine interrupted a Hillel-sponsored event hosted by the student-led group Students Supporting Israel (SSI). SSI released a statement after the event, saying the protesters "were shouting various anti-Semitic statements." In response, SJP claimed they were justified because "the presence of IDF and police threatened [their] coalition of Arab, black, undocumented, trans, and the greater activist community."[81]
- March 2016: SJP at UC Davis interrupted an event convened by the student group Aggies for Israel. The event featured George Deek, an Arab-Israeli diplomat in Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Members of SJP chanted their usual pro-Palestinian, anti-Israel chants, and in a press release following the event they referred to George Deek and the event as part of the "Zionist agenda."[82]
- February 2016: SJP at the University of Georgia interrupted a Hillel-sponsored event that featured two Israeli soldiers speaking about their experiences in the Israel Defense Forces. According to a student blog post about the event, 25 protestors in the audience disrupted the event by vacating their seats and

shouting that they "do not support" the event.[83]

Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Campaigns

Through on-campus action and social media advocacy, SJP has played a significant role in promoting the academic and cultural boycott of Israel:

Economic BDS:

Students for Justice in Palestine has long advocated for and promoted the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement on campuses nationwide. In recent years, SJP chapters have advocated for BDS agendas at Vassar College (March 2019),[84] Columbia University (February 2019),[85] Swarthmore College (October 2018),[86] California State University—East Bay (May 2018),[87] George Washington University (April 2018),[88] Barnard University (April 2018),[89] University of Minnesota (March 2018),[90] California State University Long Beach (May 2017),[91] Tufts University (April 2017),[92] and University of Maryland (April 2017).[93]

SJP's influence has reached campuses across the country, impacting resolutions at universities on the East and West coasts, as well as in the Midwest. The group has promoted BDS agendas primarily through student council resolutions, calling on student governments and universities to boycott Israeli companies of all kinds, from weapons manufacturers to companies that make hummus.

The language SJP uses in the resolutions tends to describe Israel and Zionism as occupiers and colonizers of Palestinian lands,[94] violators of international law,[95] complicit in "illegal and unethical…government authorized settlements,"[96] and purveyors of ethnic divides or war crimes against Palestinian civilians.[97] Moreover, much of the language used in the resolutions implies that Israeli companies "engage or aid in systematic prejudiced oppression."[98]

Most companies from which SJP encourages divestment profit from what the group describes as the illegal occupation of Palestinian territory. Notably, it links companies like Caterpillar, Hewlett Packard, G4S, Motorola Solutions, Roadstone Holdings, Raytheon, Cemex, Boeing, Northrop Grumman Corporation, and Lockheed Martin to the destruction of Palestinian villages or the manufacturing of weapons used for "violent bombing campaigns in Gaza."[99]

One of the more unusual SJP-promoted BDS campaigns has protested the sales of Sabra brand hummus products on campuses. Sabra is jointly owned by an Israeli company and by the Pepsi corporation. The campaign against this Israeli food product perfectly encapsulates the anti-normalization orientation of the group. In 2016, Vassar Students for Justice in Palestine launched a campaign targeting the sale of Sabra and distributed free, homemade hummus as an alternative, in addition to sharing a petition stating: "A [Sabra] purchase is an endorsement of the company's politics."[100] When the college responded by offering a second kind of hummus, Cedar, in addition to Sabra, Vassar SJP argued that by continuing to sell Sabra, "Vassar is an accessory to the colonization of Palestine."[101]

In March 2018, the Swarthmore SJP chapter launched a similar petition,[102] attempting to end the sale of Sabra products on campus. However, the University refused to discontinue the sale of Sabra; instead, echoing Vassar's response, it offered to provide an alternate hummus brand on campus. Swarthmore SJP called the decision "deeply disturbing and morally indefensible."[103] Although administrators at Vassar and Swarthmore declined to remove Sabra from their campuses, their efforts to respond to SJP complaints are indicative of the problematic sway that Students for Justice in Palestine and larger BDS Movement campaigns hold, particularly in linking Israeli-backed companies like Sabra with human rights abuses in the Palestinian territories.

Academic BDS:

Some SJP chapters have advocated for an academic boycott of Israel by the

world's scholarly community. In a most recent example, SJP has taken up the cause of University of Michigan professor John Cheney-Lippold, who, in September 2018, refused to write a letter of recommendation to a student who intended to study in Israel. University of Maryland SJP retweeted Remi Kanazi, an anti-Israel activist and rapper, expressing solidarity with Cheney-Lippold: "No study abroad to Israel. Yes to academic boycott."[104] The New School's SJP chapter shared a BDS Movement's article thanking Professor Cheney-Lippold on behalf of Palestinians.

The SJP post thanked "Professor John Cheney-Lippold for refusing to be complicit in whitewashing Israel's apartheid regime and gross violations of human rights."[105] Ohio State University's SJP chapter shared Students Allied for Freedom and Equality's Facebook post, fully endorsing Cheney-Lippold's actions, and stating, "His actions are the same demanded by Palestinian civil society, and serve to recognize and resist forces committing human rights violations."[106]

In January 2018, Brown University announced the creation of the Israel Fund, a fundraising initiative to raise money for learning opportunities within and about Israel. The University's SJP chapter released a statement expressing disappointment with the university's decision, which they claim is "in line with Israel's attempts to entrench itself in American political and academic spheres as part of the state's campaign to normalize Israel's military occupation of the Palestinian territories and the regular atrocities committed by the Israeli state towards the Palestinian people."[107] The SJP chapter also repeatedly attacks the Israel Fund for its alleged Zionist orientation, insisting "the BIF is a means of expanding Zionist sentiment on campus," stating, "nothing about supporting Israel or fostering Zionist sentiments is balanced."[108]

Other SJP chapters took further action. For example, SJP at NYU joined 30 other student groups by signing a pledge to not participate in or apply to study abroad programs at NYU Tel Aviv because their "participation would render [them] complicit in the state of Israel's targeted discrimination against activists and

Palestinian and Muslim students."[109] And in March 2019, members of SJP at Boston University publicly demanded that the university cease its study abroad program with the University of Haifa.[110]

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